RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 20th March, 2008/Phalguna 30, 1929 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock.

[MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

OBITUARY REFERENCES

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of Shri S.C. Angre and Shri Jayant Kumar Malhoutra, former Members of this House.

Shri S.C. Angre passed away on 15th March, 2008 at the age of 88 years. Born at Gwalior in March, 1920, Shri Angre had his education at Woodstock School, Mussorie; Mayo College, Ajmer; Elphinstone College, Mumbai and Law College, Mumbai. A farmer by vocation, Shri Angre was also a keen sports lover. He was one of the founder Members of the Cricket Club of India. He also took interest in the preservation of wild life.

Shri Angre represented the State of Madhya Pradesh in this House from April, 1970 to April, 1976. In the passing away of Shri Angre, the country has lost an able Parliamentarian.

Shri Jayant Kumar Malhoutra passed away on 17th March, 2008 at the age of 73 years. An industrialist, Shri Malhoutra was born at Kanpur in February, 1936. He was the Founder and Chairman of the JKM Group, a company engaged in the manufacture of high technology products in the fields of precision engineering, metallurgy and chemicals. Shri Malhoutra served as the President of the Bombay Management Association from 1973 to 1975.

Shri Malhoutra represented the State of Uttar Pradesh in this House from April, 1994 to April, 2000. He was also the Leader of the United Parliamentary Group in the Rajya Sabha. In the passing away of Shri Jayant Kumar Malhoutra, the country has lost a noted industrialist and a distinguished Parliamentarian.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Shri S.C. Angre and Shri Jayant Kumar Malhoutra.

I request Members to rise in their places and observe silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Secretary-General will convey to the members of the bereaved families our deep sense of sorrow and sympathy.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Bharatpur Sanctuary

*301. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:††
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to restore the wetland character of Bharatpur Sanctuary, it needs 850 million cubic feet of water;

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†† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Syeda Anwara Taimur.

(b) if so, in what manner this alarming situation is going to be handled, when after optimum harnessing of all available resources, like Chikana canal, Ajan Dam, etc. water yield would be nearly 50 million cubic feet; and

(c) whether Government of India and the State Government of Rajasthan would jointly step up co-ordinated efforts to help save this world heritage status of Bharatpur Sanctuary?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) To maintain the wetland character of Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, 550 million cubic feet of water is required annually. As informed by the State Government of Rajasthan, the wetland character of the Park can be maintained by harnessing about 200 million cubic feet of water from Chiksana canal and Ajan Dam and about 350 million cubic feet of water through the proposed Goverdhan drain project. In addition, about 310 million cubic feet of water per year for initial four years and about 62.5 million cubic feet of water per year after four years would also be made available to the Park from the Dholpur-Bharatpur Chambal drinking water project.

(c) All efforts to maintain the world heritage status of Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, have been made, both by the Government of India and the State Government of Rajasthan.

SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the reply the Minister mentioned that water is got from Chikana canal and Ajan Dam and that the water is not sufficient for the sanctuary. Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary is one of the most famous bird sanctuary in India. It is interesting to note that two-third of the sanctuary requires water and the remaining one-third is dry forest and has extensive grasslands. The sanctuary has got local birds as well as migratory birds which come to this sanctuary from August to March. More than 300 species of birds are found in this sanctuary. Birds come from Siberia and other parts of the world. This is a very important sanctuary and because of lack of water birds are not coming from the foreign countries and it is not functioning properly. It is a world heritage site. As the water has become scarce, the migratory birds are not coming. I have been told that the Rajasthan Government plans to spend Rs. 100 crores to make water available through a project.

But for the last three years approval has not been given by the Environment and Forests Ministry. I would like to know why the approval has not been given for three years. The project is lying with the Government for the last three years.

SHRI S. REGHUPATHY: Hon. Chairman, Sir, the proposal which has been sent by the Rajasthan Government has been submitted to the Planning Commission. It is admitted that there is an acute water scarcity for which the Rajasthan Government is making short-term and long term measures to avoid the water problem. As a short-term measure, five deep bore-wells have been dug out along with two shallow bore-wells and there is one open well also. But it is not sufficient. As a long-term measure, Chimsana canal project had commenced and it has been completed recently at a cost of Rs. 41 lakh. So, they will get 200 million cubic feet of water. The other project is the Goverdhan drain project, which is 16.2 kms. length project and when it will be completed they will get another 350 million cubic feet of water. There is another project known as Chambal-Dholpur-Bharatpur water supply project, and through this, in the first four years, they will get 310 million cubic feet water for the

park and subsequently 62.5 million cubic feet of water. Even though it is the responsibility of the Government of Rajasthan, the Government of India is also taking care and it has given financial assistance also.

SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Sir, till now we have seen that the work is not complete. It has been stated that from Chiksana canal and Ajan Dam water will be coming. It has also been stated that water will be coming from Dholpur-Bharatpur-Chambal drinking water project but the water will be coming after four years. By that time, the birds will stop coming. So, will the Government take some drastic steps and give more importance to it so that immediately something could be done in order to save the sanctuary because, I think, this sanctuary has been given the World Heritage site by the UNESCO in 1985? Now, due to low water level the birds are not coming. If the situation remains like this, the World Heritage status may be withdrawn by the UNESCO.

SHRI S. REGHUPATHY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, through Chiksana Canal, if it is all right during the monsoon season, they will get water through this project, and the Dholpur-Chambal-Bharatpur project is under process. The project will provide about 310 million cubic feet of water to the park every year and the 62.5 million cubic water will be availabel only after four years. So, for the first four years they will get 310 million cubic feet of water. Then the Goverdhan project is also under process. So, in future there will be no problem.

श्री विजय जे॰ दर्डा: सर, माननीय मंत्री जी ने जो जवाब दिया है, उससे मेरा ज़रा भी समाधान नहीं हुआ है, क्योंकि यह पर्यावरण का महत्वपूर्ण विषय है। कुछ ही दिन पहले UNESCO की एक टीम भरतपुर bird sanctuary इस स्थिति का जायज़ा लेने के लिए गई थी। समूचे पक्षी विहार को देखने के पश्चात् उन्होंने पाया कि वहां का जल स्तर लगातार गिरता जा रहा है। उन्होंने चेतावनी भी दी कि अगर यही स्थिति रही, तो हम लोग world heritage का जो उसका स्टेटस है, उसको निकाल लेंगे। यहां तक कि पिछले तीन वर्षों के अंदर उस sanctuary में जो अंतर्राष्ट्रीय पक्षी आते थे, करीब-करीब 364 species जो आते थे, उन्होंने आना बंद कर दिया है। क्या उसके बारे में इन लोगों ने उसका कोई जायज़ा लिया है? हम मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहेंगे कि पानी की समस्या कब से है। तथा पिछले तीन सालों में इस समस्या का हल निकालने के लिए आपने क्या किया है? इसका क्या नतीजा निकाला है आपने? साथ ही राजस्थान सरकार की जो सौ करोड़ की योजना थी, मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि यह हमारा national project है और इस दृष्टि से हम मंत्री जी से specifically जानना चाहेंगे कि इसमें वे क्या करना चाहते हैं?

SHRI S. REGHUPATHY: Sir, we have not put everything on the Government of Rajsthan. The proposal submitted by the Rajasthan Government for Rs. 100 crores has been submitted to the Planning Commission. So, we are also taking steps, but, at the same time, the point that water has not come for the last three years is not correct becacuse in 2005-06, 480 million cubic feet of water was released. So, in 2006-07, only the water problem had occurred. Then the UNESCO Mission has also visited the park from 11th to 15th March. So, there is no apprehension that it will be delisted. There is no such problem like this. It will be there.

श्री विजय जे॰ दर्डा: सर, उन्होंने मेरी बात का जवाब नहीं दिया, मैंने पूछा था कि इस स्थिति से निबटने के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं। यह सही है करीब-करीब 364 species जो वहां आती थीं, उन्होंने आना बंद कर दिया, इस पर तो आपने कुछ भी नहीं कहा।

श्री ललित किशोर चतुर्वेदी: माननीय सभापति महोदय, भरतपुर का जो घाना पक्षी अभयारण्य है, इसमें जयपुर की बाण गंगा, अलवर की रूपा रेल और करौली की गंभीर नदी से पानी आता था, इस पानी की आवक बहुत कम हो गई है और पानी की आवक बहुत कम होने के बाद ऐसे नतीजे आए हैं जिनका जिक्र अभी माननीय सदस्यों ने प्रश्न के माध्यम से किया है। आप बात कर रहे हैं कि अभी प्लानिंग कमीशन में है। आपने जो आंकड़े दिए हैं, परन्तु मुझे

पता नहीं है, किन्तु पिछले तीन वर्षों में सचमुच इतनी वर्षा कम हो गई जिस पर कुछ कहना नहीं है। मेरा निवेदन है कि जो चम्बल का पानी है, केवल धौलपुर के लिए परियोजना वाला नहीं, तुरन्त चम्बल की योजना का कोई प्रोजेक्ट केन्द्र सरकार इमीडिएटली बनाए और कार्यान्वित करे। क्या केन्द्र सरकार इसको करने के लिए तैयार है? यह मेरा आपसे प्रश्न है।

SHRI S. REGUPATHY: Hon. Chairman, Sir, it is not correct to say that no migratory birds are coming to the park. In 2006-07, 48 species of migratory birds visited the park from various countries. The Government is taking steps. We are not shifting the burden to the Rajasthan Government. We are not shifting the burden. We are also interested in that. So we have recommended to the Planning Commission. We will request the Rajasthan Government to take quick steps.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Sir, in Assam there is a bird Sanctuary named Jatinga. It is a beautiful sanctuary. It is in the North-Karbi Anglong district. It needs more care and...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does it relate to this question? Please confine your supplementary to this question.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Sir it is related to bird sanctuary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is related to a particular bird sanctuary. You can raise a separate question but this is to a particular sanctuary.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: All bird sanctuaries are equal. Our North-Eastern bird sanctuaries...

MR. CHAIRMAN: It will then become an open-ended debate. That is my request. Thank you.

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Sir, I share the concern of Mr. Chaturvedi regarding maintaining national status of world heritage for Keoladeo National Park. It is a park of its own kind. There is only one in the country where arctic cranes visit. My specific question is, during the last three years, did those special winged visitors known as arctic cranes visit this National Park and out of 360 different kinds of species, only 64 came. It shows that the park is getting ruined and it is the responsibility of the Central Government as well as the State Government to do something about.

SHRI S. REGUPATHY: Sir, regarding arctic cranes I will enquire and then I will tell you.

Realignment of Narol-Naroda Section of N.H.-8

*302. SHRI SURENDRA MOTILAL PATEL:††
SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to State:

(a) whether any proposal has been received from the State Government of Gujarat for realignment of Narol-Naroda section of National Highway No.-8; and

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

†† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Surendra Motilal Patel.